IQBAL

ROOP KRISHNA



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To my brother
Raja Krishna

Printed by Mirza Mohammad Sadiq at the Ripon Printing Press, Bull Road, Lahore and published by V. P. Verma for the New India Publications, 11—Lodge Road, Lahore

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I AM not an artist, I am a preacher. Thus the late Sir Muhammad Iqbal replied when I asked him about the function of an artist. This authoritative dictum was a nightcap to any further [illegible] t and the arti[illegible] with reverent [illegible] took place between the poet and my friends.

I had never visited the poet before. The poet did not know who I was and I am sure he did not care to know who we were. We were three, a young I.C.S., an artist, and I. The artist friend already knew Sir Muhammad Iqbal. He it was who took us to him and thereby helped me to realise my long-cherished wish to meet the poet.

It was said of Sir Muhammad Iqbal that he received everybody kindly. Kindly but without distinction or ceremony. This, too, was *true in our case.* We *were ushered in his* presence without any formal introduction or questioning. He made us feel at home by his kindly treatment and attention It was the [illegible]

Most of the questions were of social nature in which Iqbal seemed to be deeply interested as he evinced great concern in answering them. The talk lasted for about three quarters of an hour, at the end of which I came away feeling happy that I had had the privilege and

honour of listening to the revered poet, great poet, the poet of the Punjab. But I very much disappointed in his answer to question, *I am a preacher, not an artist.* Muhammad Iqbal, I felt, did not want to about art or artist. He wanted to talk society. He wanted to study the mind of people *and the mind of the people* he want to change. Life and society were the most thoughts in his mind. He insisted the idea, to fully live the life, life, the life. He condemned, strongly condemned, idea of renunciation, the renunciation of *world in any form or shape. Renunciation* him was the negation of life.

For Iqbal life and society included art artist. To talk of art and artist was not necessary. To discuss art and as entities not directly working for *kind of social order or religious mission* w to him distasteful. He seemed annoyed by question of the artist and his function. I emphatic assertion, *I am a preacher*, conv ed me that he hated the idea of art for art sake. This attitude of Iqbal towards art *seem right to certain people.* To me it shirking the most vital issue on which th question of the quality of art and its rel to life depend. We can ignore certain problems as being merely of metaphysical theoretical nature, but we cannot deny th these problems have some importance. We cannot escape the effect they have in shaping the personality of an artist and, consequently, his art. It was a painful surprise to me that Iqbal who was so keenly interested in life feigned such an indifference *to the question of art and artist.*

I am not competent enough to judge Iqbal and his work but I can say without fear of contradiction that Iqbal the poet (artist) has wider appeal than Iqbal the preacher. As a preacher, preacher of Islam as he was, Iqbal

could only appeal to his co-religionists or rather to a section of his co-religionists. Iqbal, the poet, appeals to everybody, to a Musalman as well as a non-Musalman. I have always felt proud of Iqbal, Iqbal the poet, not of Iqbal the poet of Islam. By poet of Islam I mean when Iqbal rigidly associates himself with certain sectarian views and dogmas, and when he exhorts his audience to doff all shackles but don the shackles of Koran. To me a most decadent idea. Decadent because it counsels the people to follow a life and faith which are not in keeping with modern times and environments. A life and faith which were evolved in the past in archaic conditions and circumstances. A life and faith which expanded into full splendour and glory and then went into natural and gradual decline. A life and faith which are now spent forces. Decadent because they cultivate in the community the sp [illegible] estrangement. [illegible] inspired and [illegible] adherent of wider contacts with life and invariably diminishes his outlook on things. Such preaching is, therefore, decadent preaching.

In my opinion we have reached a stage in our social evolution when to be a Muslim, a Hindu or a Christian, is not a blessing but a bane.

This decadent tendency in Iqbal was the characteristic of the age and society in which he was born. Our society of forty years ago was a society of dogmatic doctrinalism. A [illegible] fiducial habits and customs.

Almost all the contemporaries of Iqbal had similar way of thinking and took similar action in life. For instance, Lala Lajpat Rai, Mahatma Munshi Ram and Mahatma Hans

Raj were men of noble intentions and good patriots, as was Iqbal, but were first of all Hindus and then anything else. They were all preachers but preachers of Aryanism, therefore preachers of decadent ideas. They were all fascinated by the past. They wished to live in the past and ignored the present. They were all men of courage and perseverance. They worked and suffered for their ideals but their ideals were decadent ideals.

Iqbal the poet is not decadent. Iqbal the preacher is decadent, definitely decadent. A preacher of decadent ideas as were Mahatma Hans Raj and Mahatma Munshi Ram preachers of decadent ideas.

Iqbal the poet is not decadent. Iqbal's poetry is vital. Its construction and arrangement, its sound and rhythm, are profoundly poetic. Iqbal's poetic conception in technique and expression is consummate, therefore it cannot be decadent. As a poet Iqbal's place, no [illegible] age. [illegible] oved [illegible] his [illegible] y, a Musalman or a non-Musalman, experiences a poetic thrill notwithstanding its subject matter. For this reason Iqbal is a vital poet because his poetry moves, moves all who have the appreciation of poetry. It is not the subject matter that makes a work of art good or bad. It is the intensity of expression that makes a work of art great. Most of Iqbal's poetry, particularly religious poetry, has that intensity of expression; therefore Iqbal is a vital poet.

Iqbal the preacher of Islam may exercise a momentary charm for some religious enthusiasts but the fact remains that he has not [illegible] ches are not new. Almost every Muslim says

the same as Iqbal. The sentiments and ideas expressed in Iqbal's poetry are the sentiments and ideas of the average Muslim. Almost every Muslim would say that the modern Musalmans are disunited and should unite by following the Koranic laws and by accepting their Prophet in the true spirit. Every mulla and pracharak preaches the same every day to the followers of his particular sect or faith. But when Iqbal says it, it has a beauty and charm and that beauty and charm are lent by the magic touch of the artist in Iqbal. We read Iqbal's poetry to enjoy that thrill which emanates from its artistic construction and arrangement, and not to learn the average sentiments of an average Musalman. That we can learn, or better learn, by reading the leaders of any Muslim organ or newspaper.

The subject matter of Iqbal's *Asrar-i-Khudi*, *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa* and others, can hardly be of any interest or appeal to a non-Muslim. But anyone who is endowed with poetic sensibility and reads some of these poems will be convinced how well balanced, well knitted, imaginative and beautiful Iqbal's poetic expression is and as such it appeals and is a source of joy and pleasure to everybody. This poetic quality assigns to Iqbal a permanent niche in the pantheon of great poets and it is there that Iqbal is worshipped and respected by everybody, Muslim and non-Muslim, Indian and non-Indian.

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this dictum seems a contradiction in terms. Personality and life are separate things. Personality means individual self or ego. Life means that which is an aggregate, in the shape of society or community, it can be applicable to small community or to mankind. Since *personality and life* are separate entities, one individual the other collective, how can art be subservient to both, personality and life, one and many, at one and the same time? If art is subservient to personality then it must be egoistic art or individualistic art, which must resemble at least in principle the theory of art for art's sake, that is, art done with no ulterior motive but to satisfy personality, artist's personality. Art which is subservient to life must be popular art, popular in purport if not in expression, done to satisfy the mass or the community. Such art must serve as an agent to propagate certain ideas to certain people at certain time to make them into staunch Muslims, Hindus or Christians, or to convert them into thorough Fascists, Communists or Imperialists.

Art which is subservient to personality cannot be subservient to life unless life and personality have become one. When personality is absorbed into life it ceases to exist. It is no more personality. It is only life. Therefore, to say that art should be subservient to personality and life at one and the same time is a contradiction in terms.

Iqbal besides being a great poet was a serious thinker. He could not have made this statement without any definite idea. They who know Iqbal and his philosophy better should explain it. Perhaps Iqbal meant that expression should be subservient to personality and purport subservient to life. In that case the choice of theme would be extremely restricted and the artist would have to serve as a missionary or a mercenary propagandist. Then the variety and range in art which we have

in modern world would be grievously reduced. Supposing in a Fascist regime artists were made to interpret only Fascist subjects and ideas, and under a Hindu raj only to popularize Hinduism, it could not be a congenial atmosphere for the artist nor would it be encouraging to the development of personality. I know, Iqbal would never tolerate any system propense to hinder the development of personality. Iqbal has vociferously and vehemently preached the philosophy of selfhood in his famous book *Secrets of the Self*. In one of the notes in the introduction he offers an excellent explanation of the problem of good and evil: *That which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens personality is bad. Art, religion and ethics must be judged from the standpoint of personality.* A grand idea. Logical and convincing. Anything that weakens personality could not but be bad. It is the individual that constitutes the community. If the individual deteriorates the destiny of the community is doomed. The individuality of the individual therefore must be fortified. Of what good is that art which does not do that?

According to Iqbal only that art is good which fortifies personality. To fortify personality art must be born of personality. Personality fortifies personality. Anything which passes through the furnace of personality in the process of creation fortifies personality. Only such an art, which in substance and in nature is the issue of personality, can fortify personality and be truly subservient to personality. Such an art is called individualistic art. Its radical form can be called egoistic art. In general it can be called art for the sake of art. Such an art cannot be subservient to life. Life in social or communal sense is not individualistic. Life means society, where personality is in tune with the common will and opinion. Iqbal

surely meant it in this sense. Iqbal's conception of life was of the life which is based on Islamic principles and practices, encumbered with all its religious dogmas and superstitions. Art which is subservient to such a life can never be subservient to personality. Therefore Iqbal's saying that he considers art *subservient to life and personality* appears to me a contradiction in terms.

Art can either be subservient to personality, that is, art for art's sake, or art can be subservient to life, that is, for the propagation of certain ideas in a society.

Iqbal's art surely belongs to the latter category For, in the true sense, Iqbal had no individual personality or ego. His ego had been absorbed in the ego of Islam. His individuality was the individuality of a Musalman not the individuality of an independent individual or artist. Iqbal had completely identified himself with Koranic thought and principles. His personality was not his personality, his personality was community's personality.

His individual gift as a poet was truly and completely dedicated to the service of his community. Iqbal's personality and the life of his community were one. Thus Iqbal's art was subservient to life not subservient to personality.

Iqbal abhorred the idea of art for the sake of art. In another note in the introduction he says that the *dogma of art for the sake of art is a clever invention of decadence to cheat us of life and power*. Most people condemn the idea of art for art's sake. They do so, I think,

sake? It is an activity which is carried on for its own sake, an activity followed without any ulterior motive. It is an activity with the sole aim to perfect art from the point of view of

art, that is, design and composition, colour and harmony, power and sensitivity. Above all it is an activity which entitles an artist to give full and fearless expression in form and in feeling to what he, an artist, wants to say and in the manner he wants to say. Unmindful of the society. Unmindful of what the society likes and unmindful of what the society dislikes.

Iqbal attaches paramount importance to the laws laid down by the founder of his society and to the practices enjoined upon the people by him. Thus Iqbal's art and attitude are subservient not to personality or ego, but are subservient to life or community.



IQBAL AND HIS COMPEERS

IN art appreciation consideration of subject matter proves a hindrance not a help. Subject matter and art are separate things, separate, though intimately welded. Subject matter ceases to exist when art comes into being.

Clay is no more clay when converted into a pot. Its importance then is pot not clay. We look upon it as a pot, ungainly pot or gainly pot, as a pot not as clay. It is no more clay when it is a pot Separate we cannot the clay from the pot, though clay and pot are separate things.

The pot ceases to exist when we consider the form of the pot. Appreciation of the form obliterates the pot. Then it is the form we care for not the pot. The form and the pot are intimately welded, separate we cannot the pot from the form, though the pot and the form are separate things.

The clay and the pot and the form are intimately welded. We cannot separate the clay from the pot and the pot from the form, though they are separate things. Clay exits with the stepping in of the pot and the pot is in abeyance when the form commands our attention.

To appreciate the pot need we know the clay and its substance? To appreciate the form need we know the pot and the potter? No, we need not. The use of the pot necessitates not wit of the clay. The appreciation of the form necessitates not wit of the pot and the

potter. The person who is over anxious to grasp the clay loses the pot. The person who is over anxious to grasp the pot loses the form, the form which is evasive and difficult to apprehend. Form, though it has no material substance, is intimately welded with the material, the clay and the pot.

Thus in art appreciation consideration of subject matter proves a hindrance not a help.

When we listen to music we need not heed the song. Knowledge and meaning of the song hinder the appreciation of music. The greatness of music depends not on the song. Good song ensures not good music. Music and song are separate things. Song disappears when music comes into play. Good music annihilates the song. Song singers are not musicians. Musicians sing not the song. Musicians give us music, only music. Those who listen to the song miss the music. To appreciate music we need not know the song. Knowledge and meaning of the song invariably hinder the appreciation of music.

In painting too! When we look at a picture we need not know what it represents. The knowledge of what a picture represents helps not to discern a good painting from a bad painting. A good painting is good in itself. We judge not a painting by its subject matter. Subject matter and painting are separate things though intimately welded. *If particular* subjects made particularly good paintings then artists would paint only those subjects, and discard those which are not conducive to produce a good painting. Happily it is not so. Subject matter has nothing to do with good painting or bad painting. In Christian era painters painted mostly Bible subjects. [illegible]

and to paint them in any manner they like

to paint, it is the same They produce rubbish as well as works of art. Subject matter has nothing to do with painting. Serusier rightly remarked while discussing Cezanne's painting *C'est l'absence de sujet.* Subject disappears when painting comes into existence. A painting appeals to us as painting, appeals not by its subject matter. It is the function of illustration to illustrate the subject and not the function of painting. Art of illustration is an inferior type of art.

The same in poetry. A good poem is not that which deals with a subject which we consider good. A good poem is not which evokes certain thoughts and sentiments which fascinate us. A subject can be good according to our notions but the poem about it bad. A subject can be bad and trivial to our thinking but a poem about it good. It is the poetry of the poem we should consider and not the subject matter.

Art appreciation is hindered not helped by the consideration of subject matter.

When certain friends tell me they like Iqbal's early poetry better than Iqbal's later poetry and praise his poems such as *Himalaya*, *Naya Shivala* and *Tarana Hind*, I know they are talking not of poetry but of subject matter.

[illegible]

the individual life and enjoying its propensities. While Tagore says merge thy individual self, the petty self, in the vastness of the all-pervading spirit. This is again reference to subject matter not poetry. All such remarks that Iqbal is the prophet of life and Tagore the prophet of death emanate from ignorance, extreme ignorance of art.

Once a young poet, clever and intelligent fellow, told me or rather asserted in a vehement manner that Tagore's poetry was unf-

versal and would live whereas Iqbal's poetry would not because it was not universal; its appeal was limited to Muslims. It is again harping on the subject matter and not on the poetic values of Iqbal's work. A work of art does not survive because of its theme, but because it is a work of art. Sublime and universal themes, unless they are converted into good works of art, have no place in the sphere of art.

Personally I think Iqbal's religious poetry, which is predominantly Islamic poetry, has more abiding qualities than his early poetry which is national. Iqbal's religious poetry has a fervour, passion and grimness which his early poetry lacks. Also the poetic sound and poetic pattern of his later poetry are more matured and firm. If one wants to enjoy Iqbal's poetic genius one must read his religious poetry because it is here that the poet has experienced something intensely and expressed it. I am only interested in the expression. If I read Iqbal's poetry for its subject matter it would have hardly any interest for me. I am neither a Musalman nor do I believe in any dogmatic type of religion. It would be a wrong [illegible] oach. An [illegible] from that [illegible] we shall [illegible]. We shall always misjudge the artist. A poet must be [illegible]

may be something extra, besides the poet, to a Bengali. I know, and I know it for certain, that most of the Bengalis who laud and extol Tagore do not understand Tagore, the poetic excellence of Tagore. I know also, and I know it for certain, that when most of the Musalmans praise Iqbal to the skies it is not for his poetry but for certain religious senti-

ments. How many Bengalis approach Tagore as a pure poet and not as a Bengali poet? How many Musalmans approach Iqbal as a pure poet and not as an Islamic poet? An artist must be approached as an artist, to appreciate and enjoy his art. Every other approach to art is wrong approach.

In art appreciation consideration of subject [illegible]

compeers are made with no other object but to prove that subject matter and art are separate things though intimately welded.

Poets, all great poets, have a definite standard, poetic standard. This is why we call them great. Their poetry has a sustained quality all through whereas the lesser poets write a few fine stanzas and then begin to flag, become wordy and obvious. This does not happen with Iqbal. Iqbal's poetry is a highly finished, sustained product. Each line is well considered, has a very terse and firm construction. Iqbal has no bubbling emotions. His emotions [illegible] Iqbal is [illegible] an emo- [illegible] ng time and gives much thought to write a few lines because he writes them in a most resolute style. High-strung people may not regard Iqbal as their favourite poet. To them he must appear wanting in sufficient emotion. Such people are likely to miss the greatness of Iqbal the poet.

(a) قطرہا دریاست از آئینِ وصل

ذرہا صحراست از آئینِ وصل

(a) Drops of water become a sea by the law of union,
And grains of sand become a Sahara.

باطنِ ہر شے ز آئینے قوی
تو چرا غافل ز ایں ساماں روی
باز اے آزادِ دستورِ قدیم
زینتِ پا کن ہماں زنجیرِ سیم
شکوہ سنج سختیِ آئیں مشو
از حدودِ مصطفیٰ بیروں مرو

(b) آب حیواں از دمِ خنجر طلب
از دہانِ اژدہا کوثر طلب
سنگِ اسود از درِ بت خانہ خواہ
نافۂ مشک از سگِ دیوانہ خواہ

Since Law makes everything strong within,
Why dost thou neglect this source of strength?
O thou that art emancipated from the old Custom,
Adorn thy feet once more with the same fine silver chain!

Do not complain of the hardness of the Law,
Do not transgress the statutes of Mohammad!

(b) Seek the Fountain of Life from the sword's edge,
And the River of Paradise from the dragon's mouth,
Demand the Black Stone from the door of the house of idols,
And the musk deer's bladder from a mad dog.

سوزِ عشق از دانشِ حاضر مجوے
کیفِ حق از جامِ ایں کافر مجوے
مدّتے محوِ تگ و دو بودہ ام
رازدانِ دانشِ نو بودہ ام
باغباناں امتحانم کردہ اند
محرمِ ایں گلستانم کردہ اند
گلستانے لالہ زارِ عبرتے
چوں گلِ کاغذ سرابِ نکہتے

But do not seek the glow of Love from the knowledge of today,
Do not seek the nature of Truth from this *infidel's cup!*
Long have I been running to and fro,
Learning the secrets of the New Knowledge;
Its gardeners have put me to the trial
And have made me intimate with their roses.
Roses! Tulips, rather, that warn one not to smell them—
Like paper roses, a mirage of perfume.

تاز بندِ ایں گلستاں رستہ ام
آشیاں بر شاخِ طوبےٰ بستہ ام
دانشِ حاضر حجابِ اکبر است
بت پرست و بت فروش و بتگر است
پا بزندانِ مظاہر بستۂ
از حدودِ حس بروں ناجستۂ

The subject matter of the above lines has no appeal to me. I have no sympathy with Iqbal's sentiments, no regard for his exhortations. Asking the modern Muslims to put on the chains of the law of Islam is, to me, suggestive of a very narrow outlook. A retrograde not forward tendency. Iqbal's outright condemnation of modern knowledge is again very disappointing. It is a contradiction of facts, facts of life, of Iqbal's own life. Most of Iqbal's ideas are derived from (دانشِ حاضر) *knowledge of today*. I believe that those who seek can also find (سوزِ عشق) *glow of Love* and (کیفِ حق) *nature of Truth* in modern knowledge. I would wish that modern India should drink deeply and truly drink of (جامِ کافر) *infidel's cup* and get tight. The

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[illegible]

true wine bibber (knowledge seeker) should never refuse the wine. The modern wine is not less sweet, not less intoxicating than the wine of old, the medieval wire or the ancient wine. When I read Iqbal's poetry I do not think of the Saqi and of the Cup but of the wine. I mean the poetry of Iqbal, its inebriating beauty. Iqbal is a Musalman and he preaches Islam. I am not interested in either. I am interested in the poetry of Iqbal. I relish it as much as any Muslim does. Iqbal's poetry or any other poetry we should read not for subject matter or ideas but to enjoy the beauty of rhythm, the beauty of sound and the beauty of construction. Iqbal's poetry has them in abundance.

(c) بادہ کش غیر ہیں گلشن میں لبِ جو بیٹھے
سنتے ہیں جام بکف نغمۂ کوکو بیٹھے
دور ہنگامۂ گلزار سے یک سو بیٹھے
تیرے دیوانے بھی ہیں منتظر ھو بیٹھے!
اپنے پروانوں کو پھر ذوقِ خود افروزی دے
برقِ دیرینہ کو فرمانِ جگر سوزی دے

(c) [illegible]

[illegible] from these [illegible]

(d) پیرِ گردوں نے کہا سن کے، کہیں ہے کوئی!
بولے سیارے، سرِ عرشِ بریں ہے کوئی!
چاند کہتا تھا، نہیں۔ اہلِ زمیں ہے کوئی!
کہکشاں کہتی تھی، پوشیدہ یہیں ہے کوئی!
کچھ جو سمجھا مرے شکوے کو تو رضواں سمجھا
مجھے جنت سے نکالا ہوا انساں سمجھا!

(e) واعظِ قوم کی وہ پختہ خیالی نہ رہی
برقِ طبعی نہ رہی، شعلہ مقالی نہ رہی

(When the cry of my complaint was heard in the heavens, heavenly bodies got perplexed)

(d) The old heaven said there was somebody there,
And the stars said there was someone in the Ninth heaven.
The moon said no, there was some inhabitant of the earth,
And the milky way said there was somebody hiding near us.
If anybody fathomed the secret that was the heavenly angel,
He understood that I was the person who was turned out of the Paradise

(e) The leaders of Islam have no conviction about them
There is no warmth and no sincerity in what they say

رہ گئی رسمِ اذاں، روحِ بلالی نہ رہی
فلسفہ رہ گیا، تلقینِ غزالی نہ رہی

مسجدیں مرثیہ خواں ہیں کہ نمازی نہ رہے
یعنی وہ صاحبِ اوصافِ حجازی نہ رہے

I have read this poem many a time and wish to read it many a time again. Every time I read it I get the poetic thrill which its well-measured and well-metred cadence evokes If someone just put this complaint and its answer in ordinary prose, merely and barely conveyed the meaning, it would appear sentimental and silly. Some might even say, what nonsense! Complaint to God which we all make when in depression, and offer lame explanations for our miserable condition, is too common and slight a subject. But Iqbal, through his poetic intuition, has made it something beautiful and it is for this beauty, this beauty alone, we read it, read and reread it again and again. Iqbal knew this, this secret. As is evinced here by what he says:

Only the custom of the call to prayer is there but not the original spirit,
Only the philosophy is left and not the learning thereof,
Mosques present a gloomy appearance because there are none to say the prayers,
That is, the so called faithful have lost the fervour.

(f) شکر شکوے کو کیا حسنِ ادا سے تو نے
ہم سخن کر دیا بندوں کو خدا سے تو نے

The following few lines by Iqbal have the same artistic quality which his best Urdu religious poetry has. What Iqbal says of patriotism I hate. I am sure most of the [illegible] even, do not subscribe to [illegible] and beauty of the poem.

(g) اس دور میں مے اور ہے جام اور ہے جم اور
ساقی نے بنا کی روشِ لطف و ستم اور
مسلم نے بھی تعمیر کیا اپنا حرم اور
تہذیب کے آزر نے ترشوائے صنم اور
ان تازہ خداؤں میں بڑا سب سے وطن ہے
جو پیرہن اس کا ہے وہ مذہب کا کفن ہے

[illegible]

(g) In this assembly, the wine, the cup, and the sparkle are all different.
Saqi has also adopted manners and moods all different.
Muslims too have built for themselves a new Ka'ba.
Makers of this new culture have got different idols.
And the biggest of these new idols is the idol of country.
The robe which adorns this idol is the shroud of Islam.

(h) یہ بت کہ تراشیدۂ تہذیب نوی ہے
غارت گر کاشانۂ دینِ نبوی ہے
بازو ترا توحید کی قوت سے قوی ہے
اسلام ترا دیس ہے تو مصطفوی ہے
نظارۂ دیرینہ زمانے کو دکھا دے
اے مصطفوی خاک میں اس بت کو ملا دے

I would pray Iqbal . Iqbal, let us break all the idols and let us reduce them to dust, the idol of country, the idol of Hinduism and the idol of Islam, break them all, save the image of art in all of them.

Here is a poem by Tagore, deemed by many a national prayer. National or not national, it is a masterpiece:

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

(h) The... [illegible]

to dust.

Where the clear stream of reason has not
lost its way into the dreary desert sand
of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee
into ever-widening thought and action—
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father,
let my country awake.

My ideas are in perfect harmony with the subject matter and thought of the above poem. The idea is, I think, sublime and elevating. It is an idea which, personally, I appreciate and adore. Should I, then, call Tagore a greater poet than Iqbal? Should I say Tagore is a great poet and Iqbal an ordinary poet merely because I like the subject matter of one's and not of the other's poetry? No, I should not. Iqbal and Tagore both are great poets. They are compeers. Iqbal's poetic expression is different, decidedly [illegible]

poetic pattern he creates has not the obvious rhythm of metre but the spontaneous tremulous rhythm of the song, the song of the bird. We read *Gitanjali* and *Fruit Gathering* from beginning to end and are carried away by its undulating flow of melody. We move over hills and dales, through wintry clouds and April showers, through tempest and gale with the music, the poetic music, of Tagore's flute.

There is another poet, Bulle Shah, the great Sufi, whose poetic expression is vastly different from both Iqbal's and Tagore's. Bulle Shah has a very peculiar and personal appeal to me. In that sense I like Bulle Shah more than Iqbal or Tagore. His poetry is in Punjabi, Punjabi, my mother tongue. His every word and expression has a very tender and touching feeling. There is in his poetry something that strikes mysteriously on some chord in the Punjabi's heart, something which is innate, inborn.

ساڈیوں لکھڑا موروے پیاریا۔ ساڈیوں لکھڑا مور

بس کر جی ہن بس کر جی
اک بات اساں نال ہس کر جی

نی مینوں لگڑا عشق اول دا!
اول دا روز ازل دا

کیوں اوہلے بہہ بہہ جھاکی دا
ایہہ پردہ کس توں راکھی دا

مینوں عشق ہلارے دیندا
منہ چڑھیا یار بلیندا

بلھا بات سچی کدوں رکدی ہے
اک نقطے وچ گل مکدی ہے

Expressions such as these have a poignant mean- [illegible] coined and correct, could convey what these lines convey to a Punjabi who has the poetic sense and has been hearing them from infancy. [illegible]

Shah was a better poet than Tagore. Because he expressed similar thoughts in a more simple and homely way, which were so natural and easy to feel and understand. I did not agree with my father. Even now I would not say Bulle Shah is a better poet than Tagore. Similary I never feel convinced when a *Ben-*

gali says Tagore is greater than every other poet, one must read him in Bengali to realise that. I could say the same of Bulle Shah and a Persian could say the same of Hafiz. We could all be right. Mother tongue appeals unlike all other tongues. Every master poet has a peculiar beauty of expression and a standard of technical excellence which make him great. Iqbal is grim and austere. Tagore is emotional and musical. Bulle Shah is primitive and naive. Art is different from the [illegible] appeal of sentiments.

are

(۱) من انکیا بے پرواہ دے نال

ن پھسے دل ملیا لوڑے موڑکھا اوک اساں نوموڑے

ساڈا ہر دم گزرے ہاہ دے نال

اں قاضی نماز پڑہاون حکم شرع دا بھے دکھلاون

ساڈے عشق نوکی اس راہ دے نال

ریوں پار سجن دا تھانہ کیتے کول ضروری جانا

کجھ کر لے صلاح ملاح دے نال

---

(1) [illegible]

discipline?

My Beloved dwells across the river,
And I have promised to go to Him,
Let us take counsel with the ferryman.

عاشق سوئی جہڑا عشق کماوے جت ول پیارا اُت ولجاو

بلہا شاہ جا رل توں اللہ دے نال

(۱) نک بوجھ کون چھپ آیا ہے
اک نقطے میں جو پھیر پڑا
تب عین غین کا نام دھرا
تسی علم کتاباں پڑھ دے ہو
کہہ اُلٹے معنے کر دے ہو
بیوجہ اینویں لڑ دے ہو
کیا اُلٹا وید پڑھایا ہے
دوئی دور کرو کوئی سور نہیں
ہندو ترک سید کوئی ہور نہیں
سب سادھو لکھو کوئی چور نہیں
گھر گھر میں آپ سمایا ہے

... passion

... God)

A slight deflection creates ...
You read philosophical books but interpret them wrongly.
Without cause fight with each other, what a wrong use of knowledge
... harm if thou rid thyself of duality.
... of.

gali says Tagore is greater than every other poet, one must read him in Bengali to realise

Shah and

Hafiz. We

gue appeals

unlike all other tongues. Every master poet has a peculiar beauty of expression and a standard of technical excellence which make him great. Iqbal is grim and austere. Tagore is emotional and musical. Bulle Shah is primitive and naive. Art is different from the

(i) من اٹکیا بے پرواہ دے نال
ن پھسے دل ملیا لوڑے مورکھ لوک اساں نوموڑے
ساڈا ہر دم گزرے ہاہ دے نال
ن قاضی نماز پڑہاون حکم شرع وا بھے دکھلاون
ساڈے عشق نوکی اس راہ دے نال
یوں پار سجن دا ٹھانہ کیتیے کول ضروری جانا
کجھ کر لے صلاح ملاح دے نال

(i) I have fallen in love with the indifferent One.
Mine eyes are listless, my heart pines to see Him

discipline?
My Beloved dwells across the river,
And I have promised to go to Him.
Let us take counsel with the ferryman.

and of no importance in art appreciation. Thus, we do not enjoy poetry

To prove this point further I give here another example, a more glaring example, the poetry of Baudelaire. Hardly one out of a thousand would be in sympathy with Baudelaire's subject matter. He always chose most morbid, revolting and sickly subjects. He is horribly profane. His profanity, of course, is as profound as the piety of Iqbal or Tagore or Bulle Shah. His poetry is saturated with perfumes, sensual perfumes, putrifying odours, vile stinks and stenches. In spite of that Baudelaire's poetry is sublime and as an artist Baudelaire is not inferior to any.

(k) *Les jambes en l'air, comme une femme lubrique,*
[illegible]

Le soleil rayonnait sur cette pourriture,
Comme afin de la cuire à point,
Et de rendre au centuple à la grande Nature
Tout ce qu'ensemble elle avait joint ;

Et le ciel regardait la carcasse superbe
Comme une fleur s'épanouir.
La puanteur était si forte, que sur l'herbe
Vous crûtes vous évanouir.

(k) The legs in the air, as of a lustful woman,
The poisons burning and sweating,
Spread out in a fashion nonchalant and shameless
Her belly full of fumes.
[illegible]

And the skies were looking at the superb carcass
Which was like an opening flower.
The stink was so strong that on the grass
You felt like fainting.

Les mouches bourdonnaient sur ce ventre putride,
D'où sortaient de noirs bataillons
De larves, qui coulaient comme un épais liquide
Le long de ces vivants haillons.

Et pourtant vous serez semblable à cette ordure,
A cette horrible infection,
Étoile de mes yeux, soleil de ma nature,
Vous, mon ange et ma passion !

Oui ! telle vous serez, ô la reine des grâces,
Après les derniers sacrements,
Quand vous irez, sous l'herbe et les floraisons grasses,
Moisir parmi les ossements.

Alors, ô ma beauté ! dites à la vermine
[illegible]

The poetic imagination, splendour and simplicity of this poem are of consummate beauty. The elements which make a composition poetry, poetry of high order are present. Notwithstanding the nauseous subject matter and its repelling morbidity we experience similar poetic thrill, as we experience from

---

The flies were buzzing over this rotting belly,
Wherefrom gushed out black battalions
Of larvæ, which flowed like a thick liquid
Along this lively wreckage.

And however you will be like this filth,
Like this horrible infection,
Star of my eyes, sun of my being,
You, my angel and my passion !

[illegible]

ıe poetry of Iqbal or Tagore. It is the poetry
ot the subject matter that makes this poem
and. Baudelaire has rightly been condemned
y moralists as decadent and morbid. He was
in his life and thought but not so in his
oetry. His poetic sensibility and transparent
nagination make Baudelaire a master poet
nd his poetry a work of art. A work of art
ın never be decadent.

) *Qui aimes-tu le mieux, homme énigmatique,*
dis ?
Ton père, ta mère, ta sœur ou ton frère ?
Je n'ai ni père, ni mère, ni sœur, ni frère.
Tes amis ?
Vous vous servez là d'une parole dont le
sens m'est resté jusqu'à ce jour inconnu.
Ta patrie ?
J'ignore sous quelle latitude elle est située.
La beauté ?
Je l'aimerais volontiers, déesse et
immortelle.
L'or ?
Je le hais comme vous haïssez Dieu.
Eh ! qu'aimes-tu donc, extraordinaire
étranger ?
J'aime les nuages…les nuages qui passent…
là-bas…là-bas…les merveilleux nuages !

---

l) [illegible]

The gold.
I hate it as you hate God.
Eh ! What do you love then extraordinary
stranger?
I love the clouds...the clouds which pass,...up
there...up there...the marvellous clouds !

To enjoy poetry pursue poetry, not the sub ject matter, nor the ideas, nor the thoughts but pursue the poetry. Poetry is the augus music of words, the sound effect which th combination of different words and phrase produces, the elegance of construction anc form.

In art appreciation consideration of subjec matter proves a hindrance not a help.

